



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent



NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACTS: Kate Goyette, AmeriCorps*VISTA member, 414-755-8712, kate.goyette@gmail.com

Patrick Gasper, DPI communications officer, (608) 266-3559

AmeriCorps*VISTA members celebrate community service with art show

MADISON/MILWAUKEE – An art show this month will commemorate community service and celebrate the work of this year's participants in the AmeriCorps*VISTA and AmeriCorps public service programs. AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers sponsored by the Department of Public Instruction are organizing the event along with staff from an AmeriCorps*VISTA host organization, Parents Plus.

"An art show is a fitting way to celebrate visually the work of these volunteers, who spend their VISTA year creatively developing and implementing partnerships between schools and communities," said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster.

Each year, the Department of Public Instruction sponsors 20 participants in the AmeriCorps*VISTA public service program in Wisconsin. They work to raise student achievement and close the achievement gap between low-income and minority students and their peers in communities around the state.

The Art of Community Service Show will feature paintings, sculptures, crafts and photos from Wisconsin AmeriCorps*VISTA members and AmeriCorps members Saturday, July 28, 3-5 p.m., at Hide House gallery located on 2625 S. Greeley St. in Milwaukee.

The Art of Community Service Show is an annual event that began in 2005 to commemorate community service. 2007 marks the first year AmeriCorps members have been invited to show artwork alongside AmeriCorps*VISTA members. The aim is to celebrate creative service to Wisconsin communities, increase awareness of VISTA and its mission, and give volunteers a chance to network and reflect on their service in the company of other full-time volunteers.

Sponsors of the event include AmeriCorps*VISTA; the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, through the DPI VISTA Project; and Parents Plus, a Wisconsin parent information and resource center which works with the DPI to put VISTA volunteers to work in Milwaukee schools.

In 1965, VISTA was established as a national service program designed to meet the needs of underserved communities, and to address and combat issues of poverty. This year, over 100 AmeriCorps*VISTAs have devoted their time and energy, drawing upon their talents and imagination, to effect positive change in communities across the state of Wisconsin.

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NOTE: This news release is available electronically at <http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2007_66.pdf>.